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## Influenza/Flu Season and Available Resources for Providers

**Note:** This article was revised to contain web addresses that conform to the new CMS web site and to show they are now MLN Matters articles. All other information remains the same.

### Provider Types Affected

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Physicians, non-physician practitioners, providers, and other health care professionals who bill Medicare carriers or fiscal intermediaries (FIs) for flu vaccines and vaccine administration.

### Provider Action Needed

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Special Edition 0580 is published by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to alert providers to influenza resources that are available to them and their patients. While some of these resources are not CMS-sponsored websites or products, they are respected informational sites and products sponsored by health care professionals.

### CMS Resources

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The following are CMS web-based resources.

#### ***Immunization Educational Resource Web Guide***

The Immunization Educational Resource Web Guide is one-stop shopping for informational and educational resources related to CMS immunization initiatives and is available at

[http://www.cms.hhs.gov/AdultImmunizations/05\\_CMS%20Initiatives.asp](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/AdultImmunizations/05_CMS%20Initiatives.asp) on the CMS web site. Available resources include the following (click on each title to access the web site address):

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**MLN Articles**

- Article MM3936 provides guidelines for payment of vaccines and their administration at Renal Dialysis facilities:  
<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNmattersarticles/downloads/MM3936.pdf>
- Article MM3618 provides information about billing vaccines.  
<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNmattersarticles/downloads/MM3618.pdf>

**Brochures**

*Adult Immunizations and Hepatitis Vaccine Benefits* This is a two-sided brochure that can be downloaded and printed:

[http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNproducts/downloads/adult\\_immunization\\_06-08-05.pdf](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNproducts/downloads/adult_immunization_06-08-05.pdf)

**Provider Education**

The following publications address Medicare preventative services:

- *How to Bill Medicare for Influenza and Pneumococcal Vaccinations*.  
<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNproducts/downloads/flupdf.pdf>
- *Medicare Preventive Services Educational Resource Web Guide*.  
[http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNProducts/35\\_PreventiveServices.asp](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNProducts/35_PreventiveServices.asp)
- *Quick Reference Information: Medicare Preventive Services*.  
[http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNProducts/downloads/qv\\_prevent\\_serv.pdf](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNProducts/downloads/qv_prevent_serv.pdf)
- *MLN Matters* - articles intended to explain or clarify PMs (pre-10/01/2003) and CRs (10/01/2003 to present): <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNmattersarticles/>
- *Downloadable Publications* - Electronic versions of publications designed to aid in understanding the Medicare program:  
<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLN/pubs.asp>
- *Web-Based Training Modules (WBTs)* - Training courses covering various Medicare topics, including General Program Information, Payment Policy, Preventive Services, and Office Management Information:  
[http://cms.meridianksi.com/kc/main/kc\\_frame.asp?kc\\_ident=kc0001&loc=1](http://cms.meridianksi.com/kc/main/kc_frame.asp?kc_ident=kc0001&loc=1)

**Other CMS Resources**

Other helpful CMS resources include the following:

- *2005-2006 Vaccination Administration Reimbursement Rates* This publication describes the fees Medicare pays for flu vaccine administration:  
[http://www.cms.hhs.gov/AdultImmunizations/02\\_Providerresources.asp](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/AdultImmunizations/02_Providerresources.asp)
- *Medicare Preventive Services Influenza/Pneumococcal Immunizations Web Page* - This web page contains information and resources related to Adult Immunizations including immunization data, billing and coding instructions, and other resources:  
[http://www.cms.hhs.gov/AdultImmunizations/02\\_Providerresources.asp#TopOfPage](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/AdultImmunizations/02_Providerresources.asp#TopOfPage)
- *Fact Sheets and News Releases Regarding Medicare and Preventive Services*: <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/apps/media/>

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- *Frequently Asked Questions:* <http://questions.cms.hhs.gov>

## Other Resources

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The following are resources that are not CMS web sites but providers may find them useful.

### ***American Lung Association (ALA) Flu Center***

The ALA flu center site is located at <http://www.flucliniclocator.org/>. This site enables individuals to input their zip code and find a flu clinic location in their area.

Providers are able to add their flu clinic to this site by visiting <http://lungusa2.org/embargo/flucliniclocator05/> on the Internet.

### ***2-1-1 Information and Referral Service***

The Consumer Education Working Group would like health care providers to know about another new resource to help citizens find a flu shot this fall. It is anticipated that this service will go hand-in-hand with the ALA's Flu Locator site. Those who do not have Internet access can call the 2-1-1 information and referral service and the operator can then use the Flu Locator site to help the person find a nearby influenza clinic.

2-1-1 is an easily remembered telephone number that helps callers find critical health and human services available in their community. Callers can get answers to questions such as shelter locations after a natural disaster, traveler aid, emergency funding, or flu vaccination clinic locations.

2-1-1 serves approximately 139 million Americans - over 46% of the US population. One hundred and seventy-one (171) active 2-1-1 systems cover all or part of 32 states (including 14 states with 100% coverage) plus Washington, DC and Puerto Rico.

When this system is connected nationwide, it will provide easy access to social service resources for everyone. The technology ensures that a real person will answer every time – no recorded messages. Anyone with flu vaccine can register with a local 2-1-1 call center. The call center will include that information in their database and make it available to the community.

For more information about 2-1-1, go to <http://www.211.org> or <http://www.airs.org> on the Internet.

### ***Influenza Pocket Guides/Information about Vaccines***

Although hard copy versions of the Influenza Pocket Guides are no longer available, electronic and camera ready versions are available, copyright free and can be found at <http://www.immunize.org/influenza/pocketguide.htm> on the Internet.

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Comprehensive information about vaccines and vaccine-preventable diseases can be found at <http://www.vaccineinformation.org> on the Internet.

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